

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4963
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 2146

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, GR, TU, CY
SUBJ: MONTREUX

1. IN INITIAL COURTESY CALL LATE YESTERDAY, FOREIGN
MINISTER PAPALIGOURAS GAVE ME A BRIEF APPRECIATION OF
PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS' MONTREUX ENCOUNTER WITH
TURKISH PRIME MINISTER ECEVIT.

2. CYPRUS. ACCORDING TO PAPALIGOURAS, CARAMANLIS
URGED ECEVIT TO AVOID PUTTING FORTH PROPOSALS WHICH
ON THEIR FACE WOULD RISK REJECTION BY GREEK CYPRIOTS
AND THAT ANKARA DEAL THROUGH ESTABLISHED UN MACHINERY.
CARAMANLIS APPARENTLY WON NO SPECIFIC COMMITMENTS
FROM ECEVIT BUT MAINTAINED GOG PREFERRED POSITION THAT
ISSUES WERE FOR NEGOTIATION BETWEEN CYPRIOT COMMUNITIES
UNDER AEGIS OF UNSYG. PAPALIGOURAS
ADDED THAT CARAMANLIS ALSO ADVISED ECEVIT TO
RESTRIAN DENKTASH FROM ANY IMPETUOUS ACTIONS SO THAT
SITUATION IS NOT AGGRAVATED BY DIFFERING IMPULSES
EMANATING FROM ANKARA AND FROM THE TURKISH CYPRIOT
COMMUNITY. I WAS UNABLE TO WRING ANYTHING FURTHER
FROM PAPALIGOURAS ON THE SUBSTANCE OF ECEVIT'S
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PRESENTATION ON CYPRUS OTHER THAN THE COMMENT THAT
ECEVIT DID NOT DISMISS CARAMANLIS' ADMONITIONS.

3. BILATERAL ISSUES - AEGEAN ISLAND AND AIRSPACE.

CARAMANLIS ARGUED THAT THE PROBLEMS WERE NOT
INSURMOUNTABLE AND THAT AT THEIR LEVEL THE PRIME

MINISTERS WOULD BE REQUIRED TO MAKE DIFFICULT POLITICAL DECISIONS IF SETTLEMENTS WERE TO BE OBTAINED. PAPALIGOURAS SAID THAT CARAMANLIS STRESSED THAT THE TASK OF FINDING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUMMIT DECISION SHOULD BE GIVEN OVER TO SPECIALISTS WHO SHOULD BE GUIDED BY INTERNATIONAL LAW BUT WHO WOULD NOT IGNORE "INTERNATIONAL PROACTICE" -- I.E., THE SEARCH FOR PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS NOT BE FRUSTRATED BY OMISSIONS IN CODIFIED LAW. EXPLAINING, PAPALIGOURAS REFERRED TO PRAGMATISM OTHER NATIONS, INCLUDING THE UNITED STATES, ARE APPLYING IN SEEKING TO RESOLVE SIMILAR SEA BED AND TERRITORIAL DISPUTES. TO MY QUESTION ON ECEVIT'S REACTION TO THESE EXHORTATIONS, PAPALIGOURAS' REPLY WAS THAT ECEVIT "DIDN'T SAY YES AND DIDN'T SAY NO." THE FOREIGN MINISTER ADDED THAT NO DATES HAD BEEN SET FOR FOLLOW-ON MEETING BELOW THE SUMMIT AND THAT THE PRIME MINISTERS WOULD PROBABLY NOT SEE ONE ANOTHER BEFORE THE NATO MEETING IN WASHINGTON.

4. COMMENT. WHAT THIS CONTRIBUTES TO OUR BODY OF USEFUL KNOWLEDGE I CAN'T BE SURE. CLEARLY I HAD BEEN GIVEN THE BENEFIT OF ONLY ONE SIDE. PAPALIGOURAS REMARKED THAT THE CABINET HAD RECEIVED BUT A BRIEF SUMMARY FROM CARAMANLIS EARLIER IN THE DAY BECAUSE MORE TIME HAD TO BE GIVEN TO "INTERNAL" PROBLEMS.

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5. PAPALIGOURAS INTRODUCED THE SUBJECT BY RATIONALIZING CARAMANLIS' ACCEPTANCE OF THE MONTREUX MEETING, AFTER HANDLING ECEVIT'S INITIAL INVITATION AT ARMS LENGTH, AS THE BEHAVIOR OF A STATESMAN WHO COULD DO NO LESS THAN ACCEPT AFTER THE SECOND INVITATION FROM ANKARA. EVEN THE ATHENS OPPOSITION HAS DIFFICULTY ARGUING WITH CARAMANLIS' TRIP. WE BELIEVE CARAMANLIS WAS RIGHT TO GO AND BY ALL ACCOUNTS, INCLUDING THE ABOVE, IS PLYING HIS HAND WITH CARE. WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN OTHER VIEWS. END COMMENT.

6. BEFORE MY LEAVING PAPALIGOURAS MADE A PASSING REFERENCE TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTS SAYING THAT THEY HAD CREATED UNNECESSARY DIFFICULTY HERE. HE REPEATED SOME OF THE COMMENTS HE HAD EARLIER MADE TO THE DCM BUT DID NOT FLOG THE ISSUE.
MCCLOSKEY

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